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# OUR NATION AND THE WORLD

By FRED I. KENT, Vice-President  
BANKERS TRUST COMPANY  
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# OUR NATION AND THE WORLD

A GREAT planet rolling through space toward eternity suddenly became endowed with the spirit of man, and the brute forces of its nature, which had hitherto blindly crushed and ground each other, were gradually chained to the uses of this new power. This man had vast and unseen problems to solve that grew with the generations, and when they seemed about to overwhelm him, he would rise to a higher and still higher plane, and again and again could cast his mind over the ages, and rejoice in his great advancement. The philosophies of life were early discovered, but so close to nature was this primitive man that he must needs crush and grind himself, even as the elements were wont to do, as he strove to purify his existence. So we may look back upon seething masses of struggling men, with the blackness of envy and hatred upon them, or toward periods of peace and contentment, which tell of the growth of brotherly love, and which uncover the progress of the world as it makes for that goal—still only a dream in the soul of man.

And what of the future? Are we so blind, because of our personal existence, that we cannot see that centuries ago men taught peace and good will on earth with the same conviction, and even greater power, than is true today? Have we any reason whatsoever for believing that our world of the present, which represents only an atom in the cosmos of life, is even remotely near eternal peace? Cannot we instead clearly see inevitable struggles for unknown generations between man and man, as destiny goes on its way?

And what has our nation that other nations lack to protect it from the baser attributes

of man, while they still exist even as they exist today? We have helped chain those elements that baffled the early peoples of the earth and filled them with fear and consternation, but we still use them to kill, and have called upon the lightning to take the life of man, because that man has himself, when free, done murder.

Since the birth of this nation no period of two score years has passed that has not seen it at war, and has the time yet come when even the pacifist will not strike his brother if in anger? While struggling for ideals, we must not neglect facts, and wilful ignorance will neither save our sons from destruction nor our daughters from travail, if we measure our duties by our desires.

The last to be discovered, our continent is peculiarly protected, both by the great oceans that separate it from the old world and by its peoples, which, in our own country, include representatives from all the nations, but so intermingled that no geographic line separates one from another, and no lust for territory can exist among them. Even so, our danger is great from both within and without, and thinking men shrink from contemplation of that which may happen, if we continue in our irresponsible way.

From within, our greatest menace comes from the abuse of our public forum. We allow the dishonest and self-seeking, on the plea of the right to freedom of speech, to breed distrust, envy and hatred in the minds of the people. Have not those who read and listen the same right to demand truth as those who write and speak to demand free speech? It is because of our fear of autocracy that we have neglected to analyze the real meaning of freedom of speech, but in so doing we have

overlooked the fact that the autocracy of the mob is the most dangerous form of the abuse of the power of might. Does not freedom of speech actually mean the right to express one's opinion based on fact, and is there, or can there be any justice or right, or even necessity under our Constitution in allowing the demagogue or the ignorant to use false statement on which to base argument for discrediting, from the public forum, certain of our people or our customs? The writer or speaker who is allowed by the people to express his opinions from the public forum should be held to as strict accountability in his statement of fact, upon which his logic is based, as is true in the case of the public statements of corporations or banks.

The public can discover false logic, whereas it is only the exceptional individual who can check up false statements. The result is that good logic based on misrepresentation is injurious to the people, and leads them far from truth, and toward anarchy, and much of the discontent of the present day can be traced directly to dishonest teaching.

Some day the public forum will not be open to those who abuse it, and the people will demand truth of those who would teach them, but whether it comes before a period of chaos has developed depends upon our willingness to meet the problem face to face, and then upon our courage to fight for that which we know to be right.

We require men who would care for our dollars to take a charter from the state, and we appoint other men to examine their acts for the protection of the public, but he who would take our conscience into his keeping is allowed to steal our contentment at will, either to further his own base purposes or

because he is personally ignorant or unfit. Is one so much less valuable than the other? Can dollars buy happiness while discontent lasts? It would seem as though the charters might better be required of those who would use our public forum for the purpose of forming our public opinion; and if proper examiners were appointed, not to object to opinions but merely to check the statements of fact upon which they were based, it is just possible that our dollars would be safer, and that our people might get visions of real happiness.

It is worth thinking over, and also this—who could be injured, and who could honestly object, if the people should some day awaken, and while according freedom of speech, demand truth of all who would use the public forum—Congressmen, legislators, politicians, agitators, reformers, and all who speak or write for the public? It sounds almost like the millennium, which only goes to show how far away we are from the control of our public opinion.

We are building a fool's paradise, and every class is being played against every other class—farmer, laborer, middleman and employer—to the detriment of all and the happiness of none.

From the outside the menace is just as great, but it may be, as has happened before many times in history, that the external danger will ultimately solve the internal problem.

Commercial power has been the dominant power for many centuries, and we find ourselves today fast approaching a premier position in a world of trade and commerce. The United States produces a trifle over one-fifth of the gold mined each year, and over one-fourth of all the silver. Its foreign trade is



second only to that of Great Britain. Growing 70% of the world's cotton, it supplies to other nations about a half billion dollars' worth of the raw staple annually. From a production of about 60% of the world's copper and nearly 45% of its pig-iron, it furnishes other countries with over one hundred million dollars' worth of copper, and two to three hundred millions in iron and steel and their manufactures. Although growing three-fourths of all the corn produced in the world, it exports comparatively little, but from one-fourth of the world's supply of wheat it ships great quantities, and also many barrels of flour made from it. Over one-third of all tobacco is grown in this country, and a little larger proportion of the world's production of coal is mined here, and both are exported in large amounts. Nearly three-fourths of the oil comes from the United States, and is shipped to almost every country on the globe, the total value of refined and mineral oil exported being in excess of one hundred million dollars.

Other great values in exports are represented in shipments of meat and dairy products, hides and leather goods, and in miscellaneous manufactures.

Our 250,000 miles of railway, a mileage approached by no other country in the world, enable us to carry these vast productions to our ports with speed and certainty, where the ships of other nations pick them up and carry them to foreign countries.

If we would receive payment in gold for these commodities it would take many times the annual production of the world to settle the exports of a single year. In round figures, \$350,000,000 in gold is mined outside of the territory of the United States each year. If payment were confined to gold, therefore, our total exports would be limited to \$350,000,000



annually, provided all the gold mined in the rest of the world could be spared to this country. Such use would destroy the value of gold, and it would become entirely useless as a reserve upon which to base credit. We could ship only about one-eighth of our annual total exports, even though we received in payment all the gold produced in the world. Since under present monetary systems the other nations require a large proportion of the gold produced, our foreign trade would practically disappear if we depended upon payment in gold for our exports.

What then is it that we receive for our exports that causes the great desire to increase their total that is being expressed throughout the length and breadth of the United States today? What we want in return is nothing more or less than the goods of other nations, and increasing our exports enables this country as a whole to import from all parts of the world those things which are not among the resources of our people, or that may be made better or cheaper because of the differences in the temperament and customs of other nations, or the special developments peculiar to them.

Among those things not found, or impossible to obtain, in the United States in sufficient quantities to serve the needs of our people, are many of the gums and roots and chemicals of various kinds, imports of which total nearly one hundred million dollars—cocoa and chocolate, for example, which are imported to the value of about twenty million dollars. We import over one hundred million dollars' worth of coffee each year, and nearly twenty million dollars' worth of tea. Rubber is another commodity that cannot be produced in this country, and our imports run close to one hundred million dollars annually. We buy from other

countries over one hundred million dollars' worth of silk and its manufactures; and while we grow a small quantity of cane sugar in our Southern states, yet our imports of such sugar exceed one hundred million dollars. Fruits and nuts of the kinds that do not grow in the United States to any extent are imported in totals running close to fifty million dollars.

Many of these articles require for their production the climate and conditions of the torrid zone, and come from countries either in that zone or near it. It might be of interest here to recall the home of some of these products. Our cocoa, for instance, comes from the West Indies, Santo Domingo, Brazil and Ecuador; coffee, from Brazil, Colombia and Central America; rubber, from Brazil, the East Indies, Mexico, Central America and the Straits Settlements; cane sugar, from Cuba, Porto Rico and the Philippines; fruits and nuts, from Central America and Brazil.

Among other commodities not produced in this country to any considerable extent, we obtain tea from Japan and China; silk from Japan and Italy; spices from the Indies; fibres, such as manila, jute and sisal grass from the Philippines, India and Mexico respectively, are imported in the raw and manufactured state in totals averaging close to seventy-five million dollars annually; precious stones from Africa, Brazil, India, Colombia, Ceylon, Burmah; tin from the Straits Settlements and Great Britain; tobacco from Cuba and Turkey; wool from New Zealand, Australia, Uruguay and Argentina.

Many of these commodities do not reach us directly, but are imported from the country of production to European countries, principally Great Britain, where they are either

prepared for the market, or actually manufactured, and then shipped to us.

In addition to the articles mentioned are many others brought from countries which excel in their manufacture, or where their peoples are able, because of special conditions, to make them on a better basis than is possible with us.

While our tourists absorb a large total from the credits made by our exports, the amount they absorb is only incidental, and in part actually represents imports.

In the light of these facts it is not difficult to see why we desire to increase our exports, for it means that we are able to obtain from the rest of the world many things necessary for our comfort and convenience. It also represents an exchange of labor for labor, each being applied in its own country to the production of those things most natural to it.

A tariff is placed upon imports for protection and for revenue by many of the countries of the world. When for protection, it is to enable home labor to supply its own market; and in this country, to allow the laborer in a protected industry to obtain a wage that will make it possible for him to live in the manner of our people.

When tariff for protection is carried to the extent that enables the development of an industry in one country to the exclusion of the article produced from another country where all the natural conditions favor its production, it means an economic waste, but as the density of population increases in the more recently discovered countries, necessity will gradually eliminate such tariffs.

When the tariff protection is required only because of a difference in the character of labor, the waste is not so evident, and in a country such as the United States, it has unquestionably made possible the employment of a great part of our people. As time goes on the tendency will be to lower such tariffs, for the great increase in the world's trade in recent years, that will unquestionably receive a tremendous impetus after the present war has run its course, will gradually work to level world conditions. Such tariffs, however, will probably be legitimate for many years to come, if scientifically applied.

In this connection it is interesting to note the "anti-dumping" plans being talked over in this country.

How is Europe going to pay her debt to us after the war, if we will not take her goods? In making foreign loans we have in effect been loaning goods for other goods to be returned when opportunity makes possible, and if we would sell to the world, we must buy from the world, or the world cannot trade with us. In extending our commerce we must realize that the world's markets are ours only so long as our market is theirs. It is right that we should work for the world's trade with all our energy on the broad basis of reciprocity; but if we hope to build our trade through crippling our best customers, it is only a question of time when we will find that we have made a serious mistake. We should take great satisfaction in seeing the trade of Great Britain, France, Germany and other countries grow, and their wealth increase, for this will mean ability to buy from us, and will represent increased prosperity in every land.

If, on the other hand, our competition is unfair,—if at the same time we are building



up our own trade we are trying to destroy that of our neighbors—our prosperity will be temporary and false.

If we develop our resources and our talents to the uttermost, and make merit the foundation of our salesmanship, we will help key up the whole world to better and better forms of production. Each country will have to depend for its trade upon the excellence of the things that it is best fitted to produce, and we will be working toward the greatest economy of production possible. This will mean the largest return to humanity in the conveniences and luxuries of life, and the opportunity to enjoy them.

An attitude of money-swaggering and contemptuous superiority can stir up only envy and hatred, and since our natural resources are very great, those less fortunate than we are likely, without any provocation on our part, to desire our fall. As man is still constituted, the strengthening of our commercial position is certain to develop friction, and if we continue large in words and small in our physical power, we can be certain that we will meet with disaster. Even though we win in the end, if we are caught unawares, the destruction we must endure may exceed that of the warring nations of today.

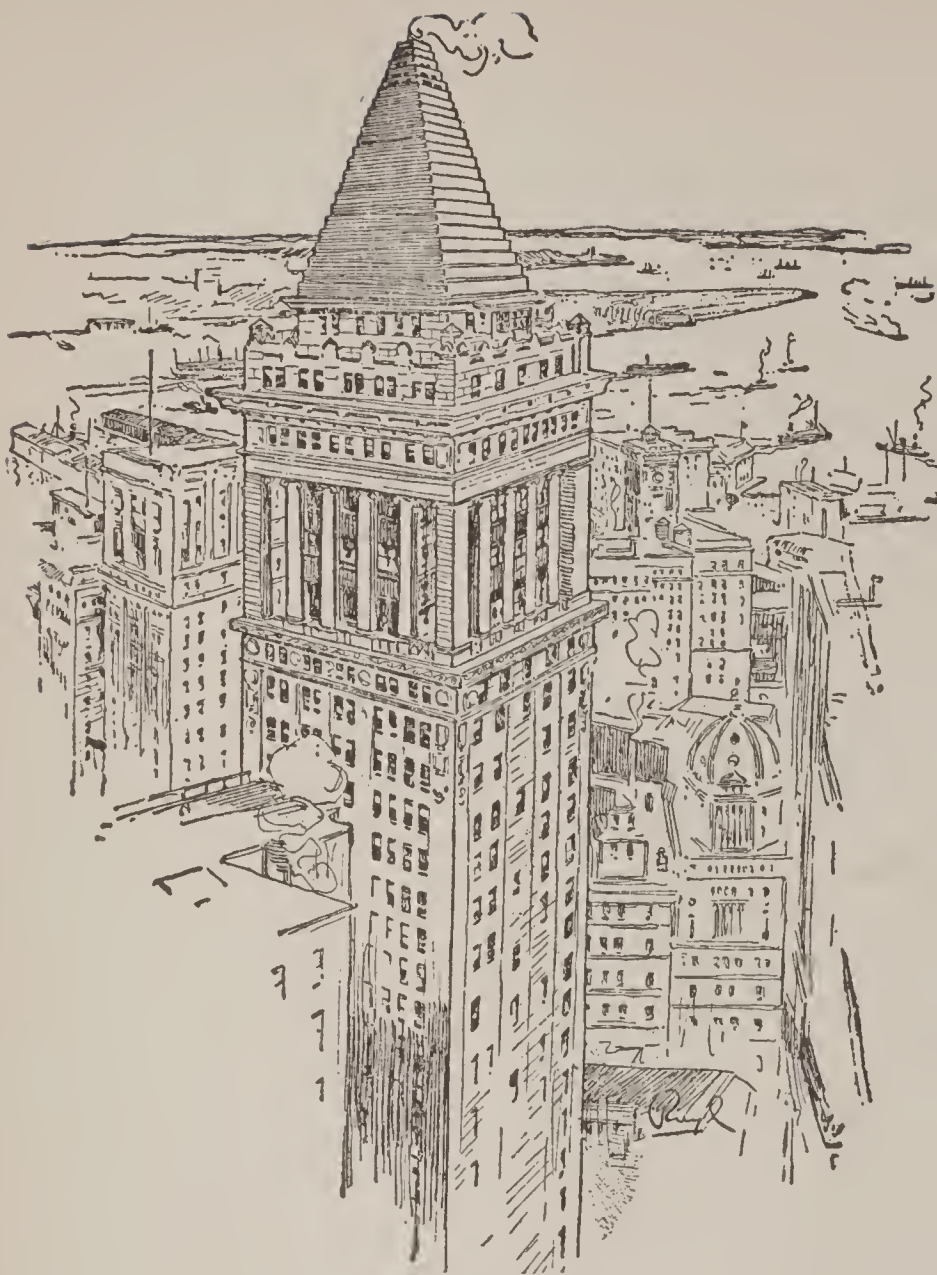
But the circuit of the earth has been made, and can we not fairly hope that our destiny may be to lead in the ways of peace and prosperity? A composite people having the multiplied experience of the ages would seem well fitted to arbitrate the world's differences, and to show by example the power of square dealing.

Let us hope that our wisdom will so grow that we can successfully meet the crises sure



to confront us as time goes on. Let us all strive to make of our nation, the last that can be discovered, the key to the world's prosperity, and the leader in all that tends to develop in man those things worth while—the things that make for peace and happiness.





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